

The Republican.

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TO THE REPUBLICANS OF THE ISLAND OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Dorchester Gaol, June 16,
CITIZENS, Year 3, of the Spanish Revolution.

THE open manner in which we have lately asserted our principles has produced the happiest effects, and, as I have frequently told you would be the case, is beginning to draw towards us, every thing that is virtuous and honest in the country. Major Cartwright, a name which expresses every thing that is virtuous and honest. Major Cartwright, whom, with me, I know you will acknowledge to be a rare compound of virtue and integrity, has spoken out fully upon the necessity of the establishment of the principles we advocate, to give substantial freedom to a people; and, although the sentence stands as a jewel amidst a heap of rubbish, it is worth picking up and preserving, whilst the rubbish we will leave to be swept away by the first storm. In a letter to the Editor of the Black Dwarf, wherein the Major has been shaking an antiquarian lance with an antiquarian writer in that typographical quagmire the Edinburgh Review, that had first shaken his antiquarian lance against the Majors, and challenged him to dispute the point as to whether the legislators of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors were aristocratical or democratical; I find the following sentence: "To be in substance free, a people must be an *armed nation*: they must *make their own laws*; they must themselves *administer those laws*; and they must have an *elective magistracy* for looking to the execution of the laws." This, Republicans, is an exact delineation of the principles upon which we stand; and I sincerely hope the Major will no longer draw our attentions to what our Anglo-Saxon ancestors did, the history of which is very questionable, and their forms of government continually varying, but speak out at once, and say, that every people, of every country, have a natural

right to be free, upon the principles he has here laid down; and that they are not, nor ought not to be bound by the constitutions of their forefathers, further than good example may be worth imitation. If Major Cartwright can bring his mind, before he quits the stage of life, publicly to teach the simple principles he has here laid down, he will cap the climax of a useful public life, and he will then see that his noted Bill of Rights and Liberties will need some purgation, and a new and corrected edition. If the Major shinks from doing this, we must do it after him, or for him whilst living, as all talk about old or new constitutions, or about whether they were Saxon, Danish, or Norman, is a trifling with the grand question: WHETHER OR NOT, A PEOPLE HAVE NOT A RIGHT TO BE FREE EVEN IF THERE BE NO PRECEDENT. If precedents are to be kept up and observed there will never be an end to human slavery. If we are to have nothing but what our Anglo-Saxon ancestors possessed, we must, to be consistent, destroy our Printing Presses and all printed books; and it may be a question whether the precedent will not warrant our substituting Thor and Woden for Jehovah and Jesus: as to worship the Gods of the Jews under a Saxon constitution will be neither precedential, antiquarian, nor consistent. The Christian Religion was evidently an innovation upon the constitutions of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors: and we may feel surprised to see Major Cartwright such a stickler for both, or not for the pure Saxon constitution, devoid of the corruptions of the new idolatry or superstition that was mixed up with it by St. Austin and his monkish followers. He, even in the midst of an essay to defend the democratical character of the Anglo-Saxon Constitution, talks about a "*Christian sense of the natural equality of man*," which to my mind is arrant nonsense, as there is no connection between the word *Christian* and the word *natural*, but they rather form an antithesis. Christianity promises an equality in heaven, to those who can get there, which is all a delusion practised by Kings and Priests, in order, the better to keep up the unjust inequalities among its followers on earth; but the "*Christian sense of the natural equality of man*," is altogether a new doctrine? This word *Christian* appears to be applicable to every thing but to nature and truth, and I heartily wish the Major would shake it off.

Major Cartwright talks about the corruptions of the English Constitution in exact the same strain, as those Deists in disguise, calling themselves Unitarian and Free-

thinking Christians, talk about the corruptions of Christianity. The Major says, what is now seen, is nothing more than the corruptions of the English Constitution; and these pretended Christians say, what is now practised is nothing more than the corruptions of Christianity. But this is not the fact. Christianity was never known in this or in any other country less immoral than it is at present; and never at any one period of English history did Englishmen enjoy more liberty than they do at this moment. This arises not from the abatement of a tyrannical or corrupt disposition on the part of our rulers or managers of Church and State, but from the growing intelligence of the age, and from a greater degree of knowledge having spread among the people than ever existed at any former time. As the above mentioned Deists wrap themselves in the cloak of Christianity, to evade the penal laws that would otherwise affect them, so the Major, from the same motive, throws the cloak of Monarchy over a real Republican heart.

I have not seen the original essay, in the Edinburgh Review that has been addressed to Major Cartwright; but from what I can gather from the extracts he has made in his answer; I think he has been well and properly handled; and his futile grounds of looking back a thousand years for pattern whereby to reform the present Government, fitly, and admirably, and sarcastically exposed. It is very probable the essay emanated from the sarcastic pen of Mr. Brougham; and if so, he has my thanks for it, as having done a very useful public act. The forty years of petitioning seems to have been suitably noticed, and the folly of a nation, panting after an extended liberty, proceeding to obtain it upon such grounds, very properly depicted. Major Cartwright does not appear to me to have read the essay in the spirit in which it has been put forth: he has met it in its literal sense, whilst the allegory has been overlooked. To me it appears, the essay has been put forth as a jeer upon Major Cartwright, for seeking, among the musty records of the antiquarian, the right, the ground, and the pattern, whereon to reform the present and to form the future government of this country, instead of appealing to the law of nature for the right; and to the good sense of the age, or the existing examples of Spain, Portugal, and America, for the pattern, and the plan of proceeding. We frequently find the Major, and in the letter under notice for once, complaining of the blindness of Thomas Paine and his disciples in not being able to see the beauties of the constitutions of

our ancestors, or what he calls the real constitution of England, and wonders how and why Mr. Paine could ever say, that, "England had no constitution at all." Mr. Paine was perfectly right, when he spoke in a comparative point of view with reference to the then existing constitutions of France and the United States of America; and I, as a disciple of Mr. Paine in politics, respectfully tell Major Cartwright that, the fairy constitution he has framed in his mind, as once having existed as a whole in England, is no where to be found in the records of English history. It is a phantom, like that upon which Christianity is founded; and the moment the people of this country can begin to legislate for themselves they will both be blown away by the spirit of free discussion. It will fall like the Gods and the Devils, the spirits and the witches of past ages, before the spread and the force of knowledge among the people. This trade of precedent and delusion must cease, and let me entreat Major Cartwright to give up the small portion that hangs about him, and declare that the natural rights of men is to be free; and that, **TO BE IN SUBSTANCE FREE, A PEOPLE MUST BE AN ARMED NATION; THEY MUST MAKE THEIR OWN LAWS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR OWN CHOICE, AND EXECUTE THOSE LAWS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF MAGISTRATES OF THEIR OWN CHOICE.** Let the Major finish a well spent life by performing this one act, and by promulgating this one sentence of his mind, and he shall gather laurels on his monument and his tomb, which no Edinburgh Reviewer, nor no Antiquarian precedent shall sweep away. Here is the true secret for preserving an ever-green memory; and happy shall I be, as a young man, and likely to outlive Major Cartwright, to have to sing his praises upon this ground, as I now sing the praises of Thomas Paine. To this ground all Reformers must advance, or fall back to a defence of Monarchy and Priestcraft. The time will soon arrive when there will be no room for any intermediate principles to exhibit themselves, and in being exhibited at this moment they do nothing but neutralize the best. They are a species of go-between, not as peace-makers, but continually irritating and widening the breach between the two opposites, and lessening the power and force of better principles, in every attempt to bring the dispute to an issue.

Republicans, I am thrice happy in having witnessed this move on the part of Major Cartwright, for though, among the first and the unceasing advocates of Universal Suffrage, I am not aware that he ever before spoke out upon the sub-

ject and the necessity of an elective magistracy. In the letter which I have noticed, the Major has scouted the idea of any portion of the legislature being hereditary; in fact, he has given countenance to every political principle laid down by Thomas Paine. And here alone can the Radical find a resting place when he flies from the incongruities of his former political tenets.

Republicans, whenever a change takes place in the government of this country the day will be ours. When opinion has to decide there will be none to oppose any principles to those we advocate. We shall as surely walk over the course without even a struggle, as my pen is now delineating the pure sentiments of my mind. Be of courage then; be patient under present ills, and as far as possible improve your own minds and communicate what you know to others. This is the ground whereon to build Republicanism. As much as any thing, it was the gross ignorance of the industrious classes which led to the anarchy and excesses that were witnessed in France during its revolution. Such has been the progress of knowledge in that country that it would be impossible for the same scenes to occur there again, even if we had another Pitt who could again offer to pay for the instigation with the taxes raised upon British industry.

With an earnest hope that I may soon have to record the advance of some more of the political leaders, and that they may speak out in the same candid manner as Major Cartwright has done, I take my leave of you for a week.

R. CARLILE.

TO MR. RICHARD CARLILE.

FELLOW CITIZEN,

Leeds, June 6, 1822.

WE are happy in having it in our power to give you a fresh instance of our attachment to the great and glorious principles, for the propagation of which you are so inhumanly prosecuted, and to let the dispoilers of our industry see, that though they have curtailed and robbed us of its fruits; yet, out of the small pittance we yet command we can give our mites to those patriots who have the boldness and the honesty to oppose their injustice, and to show the people the frauds which are practised upon them. Though the sum we have to send you is trifling, yet a repetition of trifles multiplies to magnitude, and the source through which it flows is that of a willing contribution to the cause of justice and humanity, and not wrested from us by acts of

cruelty and oppression. No, it is the mites of free minds panting for their bodily liberty, and eager to destroy the power of that horde of plunderers who have brought our country to the brink of destruction. Arise ye the oppressed, the insulted advocates of the Rights of Man, prepare your minds for the great and glorious crisis that is fast approaching; hasten the time with all the powers of eloquence of which ye are possessed, and be ready to lay the foundation of your future government upon the natural rights of man. Those rights which the tyrants have long laid upon the shrine of despotism. Let justice be done to the memories of those patriots whose blood hath been spilt in the sacred cause of liberty, and to those likewise who have been the inmates of the tyrants bastiles. Proceed onward fellow citizen, in the same noble and energetic manner which has hitherto marked your career; continue to hurl the darts of injured nature in the face of that banditti of imposters who have so grossly insulted her just, her noble precepts, for the base purpose of living in idleness and luxury on the falsehoods and lies which they have invented, and which the ignorant and unwary have prostrated themselves to believe; for until the laws of unerring nature become the stimulus by which men act towards obtaining permanent happiness, and every relic of priestcraft, and its three in one and one in three, be abolished, that monster (corruption) will still effect her purpose of dividing the people upon those suppositions which priests have fabricated and which bigots and fools have believed.

In conclusion we beg your acceptance of the small sum of six pounds six shillings and sixpence, towards liquidating the robberies which those vultures the Christian Judges have imposed upon you, assuring you of our ardent attachment to yourself and family.

I am, Fellow Citizen,

For the Republicans of Leeds,

Your sincere Friend,

JAMES WATSON.

*Amount of Subscriptions received for R. Carlile, since the
18th of March, 1822.*

	s.	d.		s.	d.
John Schofield	3	0	ers, particularly Religious Pre-		
Charles Button	1	6	tenders	2	6
James Warburton	3	3	Eleanor Byerley	1	0
James Hatfield	2	0	Sarah Byerley	1	0
John Hewson	1	0	Esther Byerley	0	6
Mr. Wasse	2	6	Thomas Steel	5	0
George Lee	5	6	Sarah Steel	1	0
William Driver	5	0	George Steel	1	0
James Watson	5	0	James Ellis	1	6
W. F., A Friend to Political Re-			Mary Ellis	3	0
form	5	0	A. B.	1	0
R. W. Byerley, a Materialist	5	0	A Female Republican	0	6
Elizabeth Byerley, one who ab-			A Female, an Enemy to Perse-		
hors and detests all Pretend-			cution	0	6

	s.	d.		s.	d.
A Female Friend to Liberty	1	0	A. J.	2	6
A Female Friend to Liberty	1	0	John Wood	2	3
A Female, a Friend to those who			O. Story	2	0
are Prosecuted	1	0	Pickard	0	6
J. B.	1	6	Hirst	0	6
A Friend	0	6	Perkin	0	6
James Hirst	1	0	J. B.	1	0
A Friend	0	2	William Eddestone	0	6
William Liddile	2	0	John Whincup	1	0
Thomas Cornish	2	6	Joseph Huntley	2	0
John Ripley	1	6	Joseph Oates	1	0
William Atkinson	2	6	William Sharpe, a Friend to Free		
John Smithson, a Materialist	3	6	Discussion	1	0
Joseph Gill	5	0	D. W.	1	0
A Friend to Universal, Civil and			William Baty	0	6
Religious Liberty	4	0	An Enemy to Tyrants	0	6
Mr. Dean	0	6	R. D.	1	0
Robert Duncan	0	6	Samuel Ingham	0	6
John Walsh	0	6	William A. J. S.	2	0
James Longbottom	1	6	Jos. J. S.	1	0
Carlile's conduct preferable to			Isaac Kirk	0	6
that of his Judges	0	6	Mr. Croft	1	0
George Haitley	1	0	Mr. Senior	0	6
William Hampson	2	0	Hartley Smith	0	6
One who laughs at the dogmas			Eliza Dufton	0	3
of the Priest	0	9	John Appleyard	0	1
William Varey	1	0	A Friend	0	2
James Robinson, an Enemy to			Henry Rose	0	2
Priestcraft	2	6	Thomas Evans	0	6
Charles Hardisty	2	6	A Friend	0	6
John Sharp, an Enemy to the			Anonymous Contributions	2	5
Devil	1	0			

TO MR. JAMES WATSON, LEEDS.

CITIZEN, Dorchester Gaol, June 11, 1822.

THE incessant support which I receive from the brave Republicans of Leeds, makes me deficient in words for a proper acknowledgment, and the sample of the real disposition of my friends in that town, which I have proved in the person of Humphrey Boyle, makes me fearful lest my expression should not duly appreciate it. Humphrey Boyle has acted the hero under the most unfavourable circumstances in which a man could be placed, and I am informed his resolution in exposing the obscenity of the Jew Books is the subject of admiration, and the turning of women and boys out of the Court because the Holy Bible was being read is the subject of astonishment and conversation, in almost every public and private company in the metropolis. Those props of

corruption, the country newspapers, I perceive, have endeavoured to give the matter a turn, by saying, that the language of the defendant was so obscene as to require the clearing of the Court of women and boys: but you know your townsman was incapable of any thing of the kind, and you see what shifts its advocates are put to, to keep up the fraud of a divine and obscene revelation of the will of their idols.

Republicans of Leeds, I perceive Mr. Wooler has been addressing the Reformers of your town upon the subject of the disunions that have occurred among them: and as far as he thought prudent to express himself, he appeared to me to deprecate your assuming the distinction of Republicans, and my conduct for upholding it: but Mr. Wooler in this instance has dealt in words and name without saying any thing of principles. He does not venture to condemn your principles, which you have so often and so clearly delineated, but attempted to lay down what appeared to me a corrupt doctrine, that an honesty of understanding was of more importance than an honesty of disposition and action. What an honesty of understanding in Mr. Wooler's vocabulary expresses, I cannot conceive; which makes me conclude that it means some dishonesty in action; for he seems to contrast the two expressions. Honesty of the mind, I take to be the feature of your conduct, in expressing fully what you conceive to be the very best principles and challenging their impeachment. It is vain for Mr. Wooler to talk about union upon any other ground than this; he must be told that this is the only ground for a practicable, a lasting, and a useful union. I think nothing more of the epithet Republican, than Mr. Wooler does of that of Reformer; but I think a great deal more of the principle of a complete Representative System of Government both in legislation and magistracy, than I do of his patch-work system of King, Lords, and Commons, of Church and State, if he does rest upon this system; for he is as spiritual as dwarfish, and it is difficult to fix him to system or principles; or to say where and what he supports. I grant that he is a man of genius, a powerful satirist, and, doubtless, at times a great annoyance to individuals among our enemies: but, if genius does not invent better principles, or support the best that are known; if satire plays round corruption without diminishing it, and if individuals be but annoyed whilst their system of action stands secure; then, I think genius, the satire, and the individual annoyance, may be compassed within the line of a cypher.

Would Mr. Wooler call upon you the Republicans of Leeds to congregate with that corrupt and dishonest body calling themselves Christian Reformers: if he will do this openly, I know you will give him satisfactory reasons for not doing it? You will shew him how much better you can spend your time than in listening to Mr. Ward's Christianity, and where your pence can be applied to better purpose than in keeping a priest in splendid and insolent idleness.

If he tells you to confine yourselves to the old system and distinction of the mis-called Radical Reformers, you will, I know, instantly point him to better principles; to a better system of action; you will tell him that the only system of action immediately available and useful to the Reformers, is to practise free discussion, and to examine the principles upon that ground alone; and not as they are connected with this or that name.

I am, Citizen, yours with warmest esteem,

R. CARLILE.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

FELLOW CITIZEN,

London, June 12, 1822.

WHEN the people of a nation are suffering from the effects of a corrupt and cruelly tyrannical government, whether of boroughmongers or any other denomination, when such a people are insolently told that their laws are administered in justice and executed in mercy, what must be the indignation and feelings of that people, knowing as they do, the cruel, vindictive, and unrelenting punishments that have inflicted upon you and your high spirited family, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Wooler, Mr. Swann, your brave Shopmen, and many others, surely it is beyond human forbearance tamely to submit.

There is only one just and certain remedy, and that remedy by the immutable laws of nature is in the peoples' own hands. Your friends in ——— have desired me to forward Three Pounds more, being our seventh subscription towards discharging your enormous fines, which must have been imprisonment for life to yourself and your sister, and ruin to your family; had not the generous and enlightened Republicans stepped forward to your aid. Such a government shows the wonder-working effects of Christianity which says, *do unto others as you would they should do unto you*. Your subscribing friends anxiously hope and believe that your Christian persecutors, malice and vengeance, will be defeated so far as regards the fines. I am happy to say that I have almost daily opportunities of knowing that the number of your friends are fast increasing, and I hope they

will see the necessity of exerting themselves to the utmost, until your fine and Miss Mary Ann's are paid, and likewise a handsome remuneration for the robberies committed in Fleet Street, and for the great sacrifice you have made at the shrine of glorious liberty.

As you have taken some notice of the Northern Union in "The Republican," you ought to be made acquainted that your friends for whom I now write, commenced a subscription (conditionally) toward the Northern Union, the conditions were, that when the sum of five pounds was collected, a proper notice should be given to the subscribers, that the matter should be fairly discussed and decided by vote in what way the money should be appropriated; which has been very strictly adhered to by giving a month's notice and announced four times during the month. It has been debated and decided by a majority that the plan of the Northern Union (allowing every good intention to the promoters and supporters of it) would retard the march of genuine Liberty; indeed it is evident that to send any one to that corrupt House of Commons (as it is called) would be a gross delusion, and a criminal waste of money, while there are so many suffering Patriots pining in prison.

We sincerely regret the difference that exists between yourself and Mr. Hunt, because it certainly does injury; and a third person stepping forward only prolongs and aggravates the matter, you are both very capable of acting for yourselves. Although there is a difference between you as to the means of obtaining our rights, still we find generally that the real friends of freedom are friends to you both: your difference has caused some uneasiness among your friends. We send you our honest congratulations on the birth of your daughter and our hearty wishes for the speedy recovery of Mrs. Carlile, and the enjoyment of good health.

Fellow Citizen, I am, respectfully yours,

ROBERT ROBINSON.

TO MR. ROBERT ROBINSON, LONDON.

CITIZEN AND FRIEND, Dorchester Goal, June 14, 1822.

THE contributions of my friends in ——— towards my fines multiply beyond any powers I possess to vary the language in returning them thanks; but the present has afforded me a double satisfaction, as it bears out my views with regard to the great Northern Radical Union, and you may judge that I am solicitous when opposed to such men as Mr. Hunt, Mr. Wooler, Major Cartwright, Sir Charles Wolseley and Mr. Northmore, to have some corroborations, that my observations on that species of Union they seek to establish are not captious or ill-founded. That I shall ultimately

obtain the award of a good judgment in this case I feel a present assurance; but when such a measure has the sanction of such names as I have mentioned, I may be naturally uneasy at the prejudices my opposition may excite among the unthinking and blind followers of men instead of principles. The proposition for this Union came forth with the powerful recommendation of being an invention of Mr. Hunt's; and it was echoed back to him from different places as a means of salvation to the country from a further fall into despotism, and a means of obtaining all the liberty that was desirable. I was astonished at the adulatory compliments paid on this occasion; and saw in a moment that when stripped of the name of its originator, the Union was for a purpose as delusive and useless, as the principle was corrupt. It has really afforded a powerful instance of the proneness of mankind to be deluded, and of their professed leaders to delude them, and if any men, under any other denomination than Radicals, had started such a Union, it would have been crushed instantly by the powerful denunciations of Mr. Hunt and the keen-cutting satire of Mr. Wooler; whilst Major Cartwright would have convinced us by numerous quotations from our old writers, that, it had no precedent in the pure constitution of our Saxon ancestors, whatever the Edinburgh Reviewer might have written to the contrary.

Citizen, we must continue to discuss principles in a free and candid manner; and the man who cannot stand this discussion betrays a littleness of mind that marks him unfit to be a leader in the great cause of Reform. Other dispute than of this kind I heartily wish to avoid: as I aspire to the friendship and esteem of every good man, and be assured, that, I am not a little proud in possessing yours, and that of the friends you meet in ———.

I am, Citizen, with gratitude and esteem, yours,

R. CARLILE.

TO MISS MARY ANN CARLILE.

MADAM,

London, June 12, 1822.

On behalf of a few of your admiring friends I have the pleasure of forwarding to you One Pound toward discharging the shameful and unmerciful fine levied upon you. It certainly was intended to crush you for ever; but we sincerely wish and trust that your unjust and unfeeling enemies may experience a mortifying disappointment.

Madam, it would be a libel on the manly spirit of Republicans to suppose for a moment, that an interesting single female, who, with a virtuous daring in the cause of liberty has fallen a victim to the oppressors of our country, should be left unheeded to pine in a prison. No, Madam, Republicans will see you righted? then let them come forward at once and tender their aid to enable you to get out of the iron grasp of the monsters. Small weekly subscriptions would soon raise your fine. You, and your worthy sister, have suffered much; but you have set a glorious example to your sex. I hope that timid Britons will take shame to themselves and rush into the ranks of Liberty, determined to be free and redress their Country's wrongs.

That you may preserve your health and fortitude to bear philosophically your incarceration, is the anxious wishes of your admiring friends, and

Madam, your sincere well wisher,

ROBERT ROBINSON.

TO MR. ROBERT ROBINSON, LONDON.

SIR, Dorchester Gaol, June 14, 1822.

THE honour you do me by your frequent notice when writing to my brother, and your present distinct contribution with other friends in ———, towards my fines, calls forth my heartfelt gratitude and thanks. To be noticed and supported when in a state of adversity is the height of consolation to the human mind: and though I do not want any other of the necessaries of life than that of locomotion, and a social change or a varied society, I yet feel comfort from the idea of not being forgotten.

My health has improved, though its full establishment requires more air and more exercise than I can get here, under the fears and the prejudices of the Reverend Magistrates, that I shall corrupt their Christian felons with a glimpse of Reason and Truth. Yet, strange as it may appear, the very means taken to seclude myself and friends from every other prisoner, defeats the object intended; for it so far excites the curiosity of the prisoners as to set them all discussing the contents of the Bibles which are freely and solely put into their hands. We often smile at being told that the Prisoners have discovered that we are confined for knowing too much! simple as is this expression, you doubtless will respond it, and say that we are confined because we

know too much for the interest of Priests and the advocates of things as they are.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

M. A. CARLILE.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

SIR, London, June 12, 1822.

A FEW Friends of Civil and Religious Liberty in Bethnal Green have subscribed 1d. and 2d. per week to assist in enabling you to pay your unjust fines, and it now amounts to about Three Pounds; have therefore taken the opportunity of enclosing herein three Sovereigns, as your shopman has said it would be sure to come safe in the parcel he sends to you weekly, and as soon as you receive it acknowledge it in the Republican; in order to satisfy the subscribers, and perhaps be a means of stirring up others to do the same: we are at present but a small number, but shall persevere and keep up the weekly subscriptions as long as you are incarcerated in a prison—hope Mrs. Carlile and the little girl is doing well, as also you and your sister. If you wish to address a few lines to either of us—our address is on the other side,—so conclude with wishing you and all your family health and spirits, so long as you are tortured in a gaol for your principles:—we remain,

Your sincerely and most obedient Servants,

GEORGE BASNETT.

JAMES HOVEY.

Golden Place, Old Bethnal Green Road.

TO MESSRS. GEORGE BASNETT AND JAMES HOVEY.

CITIZENS,

MAKE known my thanks and acknowledgments to the Friends of Civil and Religious Liberty, in Bethnal Green, who, by a collection of weekly pence, have now forwarded me the sum of £3. I believe this is not the first time I have heard from them, and I flatter myself that their steady support and adherence to the principles avowed, becomes the same source of congratulation to themselves as to me. The subscriptions towards my fines are now beginning to exhibit something like strength on my side, more particularly as the greater portion has been contributed by the weekly pence of the industrious: exhibiting numerical strength,

which to me is more agreeable than would be a few heavy sums from a few rich individuals. Both History and Reason afford us the experience that all sound reformation must begin with the mass of the people, and it is to them, to the industrious, to the property-producing part of the people, that I address myself. I dedicate nothing to crowned, or coronetted, or mitred heads: I have no adulations for wealth and a pampered carcase, nor servility for the haughty priest and aristocrat. I shall build my house on the rock of the industry and the virtue of the country.

I am, Citizens, most gratefully yours,

R. CARLILE.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS OF EPICURUS

Are for the Perusal of Mr. Humphrey and his followers, in the hopes they will shake his and their opinions of his almighty power, called God.

God is either willing to remove evils and not able, or able and not willing; or neither willing nor able, or both willing and able.

1. If he is willing but not able, he is weak; which is inconsistent with the nature of God.

2. If he is able and not willing, he is envious; which is no less foreign to the nature of God.

3. If he is neither willing nor able, he is both envious and weak; and consequently no God.

4. If he is both willing and able, (which is alone suitable to God,) from whence did evils arise? or why does he not remove them?

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"A Lover of Truth," at Liverpool, is informed, that nothing beyond the one subscription of £10, has been received as a subscription from that town.

The statement respecting the cruelties practised in St. Ann's Workhouse, should have been authenticated with real name and address, and then the subject is more adapted for the pages of a newspaper than "The Republican." At any rate we could not put forth such a statement upon anonymous information. If the writer can authenticate his statement at the office of "The Examiner," or "The News" newspapers, we warrant it will find the publicity he wishes.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

DEAR SIR,

June 14, 1822.

In your last letter to Mr. Hunt you have had occasion to mention my name as being the person who first manufactured the Breakfast Powder in London. From one or two observations, I perceive that you labour under a false impression relative to my feelings towards Mrs. Carlile. If it were any other individual but yourself I should perhaps not take the trouble of removing it, but such is the admiration I feel for the courage and consistency you have invariably pursued, and the esteem which is but a natural consequence of that admiration, that I conceive it a duty to myself to explain to you what I thought and felt relative to Mrs. Carlile's refusal to sell my Breakfast Powder after the appearance of Mr. Hunt's. In order to do this, it will be necessary for me to give a short sketch of the Breakfast Powder, and the outline of a conversation that took place between Mr. Hunt and myself a short time subsequent to the period when he first offered it for sale.

One evening at the request of Arthur Thistlewood, that poor unfortunate dupe to a set of designing villains, I went to the White Lion to attend a meeting of the Committee of Two Hundred. Then it was that I first tasted a liquor resembling, and purporting to be a substitute for coffee. This was prior to Mr. Cobbett's arrival in England, and, of course, prior to Mr. Hunt's announcement of his intention to manufacture that article. I was at that time Editor of the Cap of Liberty, and strenuously recommended the Reformers to adopt the use of some such beverage, but finding that few took the trouble of preparing it, I made some experiments myself, the result of which was so entirely to my satisfaction, that I resolved on taking a house, and manufacturing it myself. I did so, and soon found the sale to exceed my most sanguine expectations. About this time Mrs. C. re-opened the shop in Fleet Street, and when she first applied to me to serve her with the Powder, I was selling nearly ten hundred weight per week. Mrs. Carlile's house was so well situated for business, that with my utmost exertions I was unable to supply her with a sufficient quantity for her demand. In less than a month Mr. Hunt commenced the manufacture of his, but still the sale of mine increased so rapidly, that my men rarely left off work before two o'clock in the morning. At this period it was, that Mr. Hunt called on me, a conversation, the only one we ever had, ensued. He remarked, that his powder differed in appearance from mine: I acquiesced in the observation, and said, that as the object of each must be to extend the sale of an article that paid no duty, I would tell every one that sold my powder to sell his also, that if one were disliked, the other might perhaps have the effect of preventing the buyer from returning to the use of Tea or Coffee. I only required that he should be equally liberal towards me. He approved of my

proposal, and said, that he would tell every vendor of his Powder to take mine also. Soon afterwards he took his leave, and I never had a second interview. That very day, or rather the evening of that very day, I sent to Mrs. C. to know if she was in want of a fresh supply, and you, yourself Sir, may conceive my astonishment, my amazement, when she informed my messenger, that *Mr. Hunt had told her, that if she sold any more of my Powder she should never have another grain of his.* I could not, indeed I did not, suppose that Mrs. Carlile had said what was not strictly true, but if any doubt had remained upon my mind, it would have been removed, by the fact, that two other vendors informed me, that they had received a similar intimation from Mr. Hunt. One of them with a very proper degree of spirit, returned Mr. Hunt his Powder resolving not to be dictated to, as to what she chose to sell in her own shop. Her spirit had the desired result. Mr. H. again sent it *without the interdiction.* I will make no comment on this, Sir: I feel no sort of enmity to Mr. Hunt: but I am unable to afford him my esteem; neither should I have ever troubled myself to write a line respecting him, had it not been to explain to you that it was to his conduct I attributed Mrs. Carlile's refusal to sell my Powder, and not to any disinclination on her part to serve me. One word more before I close the subject. Mr. H. in his Memoirs, or Mr. Wilde for him (I forget which) said that Mrs. C. sold other people's manufacture under his name, for which she paid a less price than for his. Whether this is meant as an allusion to mine, I know not, but Mrs. C. paid me more than she paid Mr. Hunt, and she could not have sold mine for his, because mine was all stamped with my name, a precaution adopted by me owing to the general estimation it was held in, and a wish that it should not lose its character by having others substituted for it. Having now, Sir, disposed of this business, I have another to speak of to you, which to me is of much more importance. On Saturday, the 29th of June, I shall publish a sceptical Essay on the Eternity of the World, Price 1s. which I wished to have advertised in your Republican, but Mr. Jones informed me that you never admitted advertisements. If such is your *invariable* rule I will not ask you to break it, but for such a work as that, and the Manuel of the Society of Theophilanthropists of Paris, Price 6d. which I shall publish about the week following, I should think you could have but little objection. If, however, you do not like to admit an advertisement, perhaps, you would be kind enough to notice their appearance in some other manner in the pages of your Republican.

With best respects to Mrs. C. and the most sincere wishes for your future health and welfare,

I remain, Dear Sir, yours sincerely,

JAMES GRIFFIN.

P. S. I hope your Sister's health is now re-established. Mrs. Griffin, requests that you will remember her to Mrs. and Miss C. I hope they will not suffer their spirits to sink under their sufferings.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY DENOMINATED
FREETHINKING CHRISTIANS.

GENTLEMEN,

Leeds, June 1, 1822.

HAVING myself been a member of your society, I take the liberty of presenting the following address to your consideration. I presume that you are all aware that in consequence of my not attending the meetings of that branch of your church established at Dewsbury in Yorkshire, my name was struck off from the list of members, several months before I was aware of any thing of the kind being done. When I became acquainted with the circumstance I promised to bring forward reasons which should fully justify my conduct, but as the reasons, arising out of peculiar circumstances, which prevented my attendance, continued to exist until such times as my enquiries led me to a total rejection of Christianity, I shall not trouble you at any great length upon that subject. I will briefly pass it over by observing that my non-attendance arose from my aversion to making religion an affair of pecuniary advantage. It is my motto, whether wise or foolish, that my friends shall hear from me, when I am in a state of prosperity, but not when I am in a state of adversity.

As my enquiries have led me to relinquish every system of religion; of course I have now no desire to be a member of any religious association. My object in addressing you in this way on the present occasion, is, to point out some of the reasons which have induced me to relinquish the various species of superstition which obtain the name of Religion.

In addressing you, a love of truth, is, I believe my only actuating motive, and it is a firm conviction on my mind that all systems of religious belief are injurious to the happiness of mankind, that induces me thus to publish my sentiments, I shall briefly notice some observations on revealed religion contained in your magazines, but my principle observations shall be confined to the Bible itself. Christophorus, in his preliminary essay on the evidence of revealed religion, says, "On revealed religion must depend all our means of knowing that there is one, and only one self-existent being, the benevolent Creator, and universal Governor of all things, and from that alone can we derive any solid ground on which to rest our hopes of a future state of existence, the book of nature being either silent on the subject, or by a fair analogy and inference, absolutely forbidding such an expectation." Now I am perfectly ready with you to admit, that if we have any knowledge of one self-existent being, the Creator and the Governor of the universe, or of a future state of conscious existence, this knowledge cannot be obtained from the book of nature, but must be derived from some other source, because the book of nature by every kind of fair analogy absolutely forbids us to entertain any such ideas. I know that in giving expression to these sentiments

I am coming in direct contact with the prejudices of the greatest part of mankind, in all ages and in all nations of the world of which we have any records, and I will assure you, that nothing but the most decided conviction that all the ideas that have ever prevailed respecting Gods, and that every species of religious worship addressed to those imaginary beings are founded upon delusion, and are injurious to the welfare and happiness of the human species, could prevail upon me thus publicly to attack those ideas which are considered to be sacred by the greater part of my most respected friends.

My intention is to show, not only that nature never teaches us to believe in the existence of one, and only one self-existent God, but likewise that the Jewish and the Christian Religions, the sources whence this notion has received its principle support, are founded in ignorance, credulity, and barbarism. I know that the ground I have taken will be liable to excite clamour, and many will be ready to exclaim, "Why will you endeavour to deprive us of the consolations of religion when you have nothing but atheism to give us in its stead." To such I say, that my object is truth, and if religion be a delusion, which I certainly believe to be the case, the sooner the delusion is destroyed the better, even though that dreaded thing called atheism should be the only thing left in its place.

The reasoning generally employed to prove the existence of a God, by the the principles of nature, is weak and inconclusive, its very foundation is rotten. As a specimen of the best natural reasoning in favour of the existence of a God, take the following: "I know that I exist, I could not make myself; I see order, harmony, and design in the creation; and I know that no effect can exist without a cause, the same as when I see a house, a clock, or other machine, I know they could not make themselves, there must have been a maker; that is to say, there must have been an adequate cause to produce these effects, and for the same reason I conclude there must have been an intelligent Creator, of all I behold in nature, and he it is I call God." Pretty reasoning indeed, to convince us that there is one and only one self-existent God! Make the best of such an analogy, I behold a house, there must have been a builder; yes, but how do I know that there has not been more than one? We well know that in the building of a house, or in the making of any piece of machinery more than one artist is generally employed, and if we follow up the analogy on these principles we must come to the conclusion that there had been more than one God at work in making the universe. All reasoning upon this topic is incapable of proving the existence of any such a being as your God. When you are unable to account for any thing by the principles of nature, you attribute it to your God. You think you have an unanswerable argument in support of your system by saying, "if there be no God, how came this world and all the other things that we behold to exist?" May not I with an equal degree of propriety ask you how your God came into existence? If the existence of your God be necessary to account for the existence of the matter of which the world is composed, I may in return ask you if you can tell me

how it is possible to create something out of nothing. If you allow that matter is eternal, where is the occasion for your God? Is it not equally rational to suppose that motion has eternally been a property of matter, as to seek out some fanciful being called a God to put matter into a state of motion. If I ask you for a cause for the existence of your God, I know the only answer you can give me will be, that he is self-existent and eternal. You allow a self-existent and eternal being of whom you know nothing, am I more unreasonable if I come to the conclusion that nature, of which I know something, is self-existent and eternal. We are acquainted with many of the properties of matter, we see that every particle is in a state of continual motion, and that nothing stands still for a single moment, why then shall we not conclude that their motion is an eternal property of matter. We see that by peculiar arrangements of matter, animation and vegetation exist, and are preserved in existence, is it not equally reasonable to suppose that these combinations arise from the eternal properties of matter, as to suppose that they were communicated to it by some fanciful being who has nothing in common with what we are acquainted with in nature?

Nothing is more common in controversy, than for men who have been beat off one ground, to put their invention on the rack to find out other grounds that are tenable. Such has been the case in attempting to prove the existence of an ideal being called God. Those who have found themselves unable to prove his existence by the principles of nature, have had recourse to what they call the internal evidences of revealed religion, but I think I shall shew clearly, that what is called revealed religion, proves nothing more than that it is the work of a knave, a tyrant, an enemy to the happiness of mankind.

One of the correspondents in the Magazine, Vol. 4, Page 486, in treating on the character of Moses, says: "The character of Moses as a lawgiver has never been surpassed—the various shades of criminality; the weight which is given to every circumstance connected with it; the variation of punishment suited to every species of crimes, are all so many beauties that whenever any of them are discovered in modern codes of law, they immediately excite the admiration of the benevolent and virtuous man." With all due deference to the opinions of the above writer, and such persons as may agree with him in sentiment, I must say that I am altogether of a contrary opinion. I acknowledge that there are some parts of the law which are unobjectionable, and even a few scraps which are valuable, yet I think it requires only a slight knowledge of human nature to discover that the Mosaic law, taken as a whole or aggregate, is a composition tending to debase the mind, to enslave and demoralize mankind. The greatest part of its injunctions are evidently framed with the sole intention of increasing the power of a tyrannical priesthood, and reducing the great body of the people to a state of the most abject slavery.

What I would ask can be more detestable than the law for the trial of jealousy, contained in the fifth chapter of the book of Numbers?

Read the account in your Bibles then tell me if this law be founded on justice and humanity. The following are the words of the book : " And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, if a man's wife go and commit trespass against him; and a man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of her husband and be kept close and she be defiled, and there be no witness against her, neither she be taken with the man; and the spirit of jealousy come upon him and he is jealous of his wife and she be defiled; or, if the spirit of jealousy come upon him and he be jealous of his wife and she be not defiled; then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal: he shall put no oil upon it nor put frankincense thereon, for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial bringing iniquity to remembrance. And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the Lord; and the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle, the priest shall take and put it into the water; and the priest shall set the woman before the Lord, and uncover the woman's head and put the offering of memorial in her hand, which is the jealousy offering; and the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that causeth the curse; and the priest shall charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, if no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone and done uncleanness with another instead of thy husband, be thou free from this bitter water that causeth the curse: But, if thou hast gone aside to another instead of thy husband, and if thou be defiled and some man have lain with thee beside thine husband: then the priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing, and the priest shall say unto the woman the Lord make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the Lord doth make thy thigh to rot and thy belly to swell; and this water that curseth the curse shall go into thy bowels to make thy belly to swell and thy thigh to rot. And the woman shall say, Amen, Amen. And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot them out with the bitter water and he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse: and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her and become bitter. Then the priest shall take the jealousy offering out of the woman's hands, and shall wave the offering before the Lord and offer it upon the altar; and the priest shall take a handful of the offering, even the memorial thereof, and burn it upon the altar, and afterwards **THE WOMAN SHALL DRINK THE WATER.** And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass that if she be defiled and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her and become bitter, and her belly shall swell and her thigh shall rot, and the woman shall be a curse among her people. And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean, then she shall be free and shall conceive seed. This is the law of jealousies, when a wife goeth aside to another instead of her husband, and is defiled: or, when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall

set the woman before the Lord, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law. Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and this woman shall bear her iniquity."

Where is the man of virtue and benevolence who can contemplate such a law without abhorrence. Let me ask seriously if there be a member of the church denominated Freethinking Christians that would consent thus to place his own wife under the influence of the priest? Is there a member of your assembly who would not view with abhorrence the conduct of any man who should attempt to introduce such a law in the British Legislature? Would you not consider such an individual worthy the execration of all mankind? Yet this is one of the laws of Moses! This is supposed to be derived from a just Deity, the Governor of the universe, the father and the friend of mankind. Here is a law which placed the whole of the female population under the immediate controul of the priest; a law which would render the whole female population spies over the conduct of their husbands, as it made the reputation and even the life of every female in the nation depend upon humouring and indulging a tyrannical priesthood. Yes, this law made the life and reputation of every woman depend upon the caprice of the priests, who are never at a loss for the means of raising scandalous reports: a liquid drank at the hands of the priest is to determine her guilt or innocence, and upon his caprice it depended whether he would give her a poisonous compound or a little harmless water.

Gentlemen, I appeal to you as men of humanity, I ask you if such power be fitting to be placed in the hands of any set of men, much less in the hands of priests? Think freely. Place yourselves in the situation of the unfortunate Hebrew woman, who might offend the priest by refusing to communicate the private concerns of her husband, then tell me your opinion of the Jewish Legislator. The above law is sufficient to show the intention of the Jewish lawgiver of subjecting the people to the most abject slavery under the dominion of the priests. I will now bring forward another law founded upon an ignorance of human anatomy and I will leave my readers to judge of its moral tendency. Perhaps it may be urged that the Jews not being a scientific people, the ignorance of human anatomy manifested in the following law can be no objection. But was the God of the Jews, who is represented as the Creator of the human species, so wretchedly ignorant of the construction of the creatures he had made, as to institute a law which should subject a young and innocent female to death, because she might happen to give offence to an ignorant and clownish fellow destitute of every principle of humanity? The law is as follows, Deut. xxii. 13. "If any man take a wife and go in unto her, and hate her, and give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil report upon her, and say, I took this woman and when I came to her I found her not a maid. Then shall the father of the damsel and her mother take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate; and the damsel's father shall say unto the elders of the city, I gave my daughter unto

this man to wife and he hateth her; and so he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him, and they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil report upon a virgin of Israel; and she shall be his wife, he may not put her away all his days. But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel, then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die; because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house; so shalt thou put evil away from among you."

According to the best of my recollection some of our modern travellers say, that a law of this description is actually in force at the present day amongst some of the savage tribes of Africa; the writer of the account appears at a loss to find language sufficiently strong to express his indignation at such a piece of glaring injustice; but he appears entirely to have forgotten that it is a law of the Bible.

I shall not enter into the contests that have existed amongst anatomists upon this subject, but simply state that it is the opinion of the most able anatomists that, according to the Jewish legislator, all the healthful portion of our females must be stoned to death, unless they would condescend to use some kind of deception to produce a bloody cloth on the marriage night, a trick that none would think of, but those who were conscious of criminality. Let me ask you, Gentlemen, or at least such of you as are fathers, what you would think of a man who should attempt to put such a law in force with your own daughters.

The next law to which I particularly wish to call your attention is Exodus xxi. 20. If a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished; notwithstanding if he continue a day or two he shall not be punished, for he is his money." On this law I make no observations. It stands itself a record of the manner, in which the Jewish legislator proportioned the punishments to the crimes. Upon a candid review of the Jewish penal code, it appears to be more barbarous than that of any other nation either ancient or modern. The number of crimes to be visited with the punishment of death exceeds those in the sanguinary code of Britain. Many of the crimes are trivial, and some cannot possibly be considered crimes, whilst the master who murdered his servant, if the servant did not die of a day or two, was to be free from punishment. The manner of inflicting the punishment of death by throwing stones according to Bible law, surpasses in cruelty every invention of torture both ancient and modern, whilst the execution of the sentence would drive away every noble feeling of the heart. The humane and benevolent of the present day, consider that the great object of legislation ought to be to prevent

crime, rather than the punishment of the criminals. Every Free-thinking Christian with whom I have yet conversed upon this subject, has given it as his opinion that it is unjust to make laws to take away the life of any man, unless for the crime of murder: and some distinguished members have professed to agree with me, that it would be a more rational mode of proceeding, to confine the murderer in such a manner as should prevent the possibility of his committing future mischief, and to devote the remaining part of his life to labour either for the benefit of the friends of the murdered individual, or for the benefit of the state. But how do principles like these agree with Bible legislation? They are as much opposed to each other, as light is to darkness.

Crime is in fact, a mental disease, the produce of ignorance; but neither Judaism nor Christianity proposes any rational remedy. Experience teaches us that vicious habits are most easily corrected by removing temptation, by mildness, by promoting the happiness of the individual to be corrected, and by a careful cultivation of the mind; but religion neglects these, and endeavours to restrain the passions by the fear of death, and hell fire.

Will Christophilus, or any other member of your society, after this, say, "I consider that revealed religion, as contained in the Bible is one of the greatest blessings that the Deity ever conferred on his creature man: that it is every way worthy of God's desire, and of man to receive: that it corresponds with all the wishes and all the wisdom, that the wisest and the best of men have ever had." For my part I say that if the laws to which I have already called your attention, and the sanguinary and barbarous penal code of the Jewish legislator, form parts of the best gifts of the Deity, it would be well for man if the Deity would keep his gifts to himself.

I have shown the nature of the morality taught in the books ascribed to Moses, or rather I have shown the detestable injustice and the demoralizing effects of some of those laws which the writer pretends were immediately derived from the Deity. I, as well as Christophilus, think it is of very little importance who was their author, but I think it of some importance to shew that the law of Moses was either totally unknown or entirely disregarded during the time of most of the Kings of Israel. The temple of Solomon and its ornaments were made in direct opposition to the injunctions of the Mosaic law. During the times of the Judges, and the time of their great prophet Samuel, the time of David and Solomon, and indeed of all the early Kings, the great annual ceremony of the passover, which was to be kept in commemoration of their delivery from Egypt, is never noticed. In the time of Josiah, the book of the law is represented as being found by Hilkiah the priest, then they keep the passover. These points, in my opinion, are sufficient to show that the Mosaic religion is not of greater antiquity than the days of Josiah. But I think if any individual compare the book of Ezekiel with the books of Moses, he can scarcely fail coming to a conclusion that they are all the work of the same man. To me, however, it is of

very little importance who was the author of these books, whether they were the work of Ezekiel, or of Ezra, or of Moses, or of any other man, their contents are sufficient to show them to be founded upon the basest imposture: their general principles are slavish, degrading, and demoralizing:—Customs repugnant to every principle of humanity are sanctioned, and their penal code is a monument of barbarous cruelty.

I shall pass very slightly over the other books contained in the Bible as I do not find many observations upon them necessary for my present purpose. I will just observe that the book of Psalms, so much admired by modern religionists, is a specimen of the breathings of one of the most malignant beings that could possibly disgrace the human form. Where will you find the expressions of feelings more vindictive? Where will you find cruelty and revenge maintained in such a manner as in the Psalms of David? Amongst the books said to be written by Solomon, Christophilus enumerates the Song of Solomon, and he says of these books: "They possess intrinsic excellency of composition, and very good morals." On this point I should only like to know, if Christophilus would recommend the morality of the Song of Solomon as a pattern for the imitation of his own daughters.

With regard to the numerous prophecies concerning Christ, which are said to be contained in the Old Testament, I must say that after the most careful search I am not able to find one which bears the most distant relation to any such character. Indeed taking the prophecies at large, they are a piece of complete jargon, a good deal resembling the language of our modern fortune-tellers.

I know that you will be ready to say, How do you account for the present extraordinary situation of the Jews, their dispersion amongst the different nations of the earth, and their continuance as a separate and distinct people? The situation of the Jews in my opinion requires no supernatural aid to account for it, and very little consideration will show, that the pretended prophecies quoted by Christophilus, from Deut. xxviii. are not by any means applicable. Those pretended prophecies relate to the whole body of the Israelitish nation, whilst the people now known under the name of Jews consist almost entirely of two families out of the twelve, the other ten families, or tribes, who, according to Bible history, abandoned the Mosaic law, are swallowed up amongst the rest of mankind, so that no traces of their existence can be found. This fact at once belies the prophecy, and gives us one of the principal reasons why the Jews continue a separate and distinct people: namely, because the Mosaic institutions are tended to make them the enemies of all mankind. Why should Christophilus attempt to prove the existence, the power, and the interference of a supernatural being, by the dispersion and present situation of the Jews, when there are other causes so much more rational that will account for their situation? The prejudices instilled into the minds of the Jews, are of themselves sufficient to keep them separate and distinct from all other

people. They are induced to believe that the God whom they worship was the Creator of all things, and the only true God, and that the Gods of all other nations are destitute of power; they have been induced to believe, that they are the peculiar favourites of this God, whilst all other nations are either disregarded or held in abhorrence by him. To a Christian, these principles may appear incapable of producing any great effect, yet to the man who studies human nature, for the purpose of discovering the causes of human actions, they present the clue for discovering the cause of that system of delusion which has filled the earth with blood.

The ideas of the Jews, that they were the peculiar favourites of heaven, and that the Deity had condescended in a peculiar manner to reveal his will to them, and to select them for his peculiar people, whilst he rejected all the rest of mankind and left them in a state of ignorance, were sufficient to fill them with pride, to make them suppose they were wiser than all the rest of mankind, and to cause them to disregard or despise all the rest of the human race. The laws which forbid all intercourse with other nations, and those which commanded them to destroy all who worshipped any other God, tended to make them a band of religious savages, hating all the rest of mankind, and only prevented by their want of power from exterminating all the rest of mankind from the face of the earth.

The haughty, overbearing and tyrannical disposition of the Jews towards the people of other nations, must of necessity have caused them to be despised and hated by the rest of mankind. If a period ever existed when the barbarous and detestable penal code of the Jews was in force, is it to be wondered at that they should be despised and hated by all nations, and that great outrages should occasionally have been committed against them, and that sometimes different nations should even attempt to exterminate them. In speaking thus of the Jews I am aware that they are composed of the same materials as other men, but I am now speaking of them as beings whose minds have been poisoned by one of the most detestable systems of superstition: a system hostile to every principle of justice and humanity, a system in which every ordinance, and almost every law, has evidently been designed for the purpose of rendering the people the passive slaves of the priest: a system which placed the reputation and even the lives of all the female part of the population at the absolute disposal of the priest, (Numb. v.) a system which clears the man who murdered his servant from punishment, but orders that the man who gathered sticks on the seventh day of the week should be stoned to death (Exod. xxi. 20. Numb. xv. 32). It is the Mosaic law which says, thou shalt not suffer a witch to live (Exod. xxii. 18. Lev. xx. 6). It is the Mosaic law which says, He that sacrificeth unto any God, save the Lord, shall be utterly destroyed (Deut. xiii. and xvii. 2). It is the Mosaic law which says, Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest, whosoever doth work thereon shall be put to death: ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the sabbath day (Exod.

xxxv. 2.) It is the Mosaic law which commands, That he who shall blaspheme against the name of the Lord shall be stoned with stones until he die (Lev. xxiv). Pray will you have the kindness to tell me what is blasphemy? Can any thing be more disgraceful, or represent any being in a more odious light, than to say that the being you call God is the author of the Mosaic law? The Mosaic law admits of traffic in human flesh (Exod. xxi). It is the Mosaic law which allows that the owner of an ox which killed any person should purchase his own life with money, whilst the poor man who was unable to pay the money must be put to death; but if the ox had only killed a servant, who appears not to be considered as one of the human species, the owner of the ox was to give thirty shekels of silver to the owner of the servant (Exod. xxi).

With laws and institutions like these, is it to be wondered at that the Jews should hate all nations, and that all nations in return should hate them? Is it to be wondered at that the people whose minds were debased by such brutal and barbarous institutions should continue separate and distinct from all other nations of the world. Will any other individual venture to assert that the laws of Moses must necessarily excite the admiration of the benevolent and virtuous man?

I shall now leave the disgusting detail of the Mosaic law, in order to make a few observations on the Christian system. If from the nature of the Jewish legislation, it cannot be considered as a system of divine revelation, Christianity must of necessity fall to the ground, because it professes to be founded upon the Mosaic system. If any one should continue to argue for the divine origin of the Mosaic religion, he must admit that his God is destitute of all those qualities that are generally attributed to him. The servile principles of the Mosaic law, are sufficient to show it to be the work of a tyrant; its demoralizing tendency is sufficient to show that its author has been no friend to human happiness: whilst the barbarous and sanguinary penal code, and the disproportionate punishment inflicted on different species of crimes, are sufficient to show that its author has been destitute of every principle of justice and humanity. It is upon this system that Christianity is founded, and the simple circumstance of the author of Christianity acknowledging such a system to be of divine origin is sufficient to destroy all his own pretensions to supernatural aid.

Christianity has always been praised by its votaries as a pure and exalted system of morality, and I must acknowledge that from the influence of education and custom, I have been induced to praise it myself. It is far from being my intention at present to say that the New Testament, the only history of early Christianity that we possess, contains no good moral precepts; but I am decidedly of opinion that the good principles are more than counterbalanced by the bad. The modern professors of Christianity, of all sects and parties, always endeavour to represent it as something entirely different from the representations contained in the New Testament. In no

one thing is it perhaps more grossly misrepresented than when it is spoken of as a system intended to supersede and abolish the Mosaic law. Indeed, if the Mosaic system was of divine origin, no other system which professed to abolish it could be of divine origin likewise; for when that system was instituted, it was declared that it should be a law for those who were then living, and to their seed after them for ever throughout their generations: on this account no one could possibly attempt to abolish it without running contrary to almost every principle of that system which has been handed down to us. Of this fact the founder of the Christian system appears to be perfectly well aware, therefore he cautiously guards against any such ideas being entertained, by saying, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. v. 17). This is in direct opposition to the creed of the generality of Christians, who suppose that Jesus came to abolish the Mosaic law. The author of Christianity is here made to say, he came not to destroy but to fulfil, to perform, or act in conformity with its institutions, and not to put an end to them as generally represented. With the exception of some slight specimens of disregard to the sabbath, Jesus was a Jew to all intents and purposes; and that he evidently designed his followers to act in conformity with the Mosaic institutions, there can be no doubt to any one who carefully examine his history.

Upon these principles we are justified in coming to a conclusion, that Christianity is founded upon Judaism. Though the Mosaic laws are not all repeated singly by its founder, yet in the above passage, he positively declares, that they formed a part of his own system; hence, whatever may be said of the purity of Christianity, or of its excellent morality, it becomes chargeable with all the servile, debasing, and immoral principles of the Mosaic law. Christianity includes the barbarous and sanguinary penal code of the Jews, and all its attendant crimes and misery. With such a foundation, is it necessary for us to examine further before we pronounce it to be a system opposed to the improvement of man, and tended to degrade him below the beasts of the field.

In my opinion it is altogether unnecessary to proceed one step further in order to convince any unprejudiced mind of the baseness and delusion of both the Jewish and the Christian system, yet as most men have in their infancy imbibed prejudices in favour of the Christian system, and as early prejudices have a powerful effect on the mind, I shall endeavour to point out some of the evil effects arising from this source, by exposing that system of delusion which we have all imbibed, as it were, with our mother's milk.

Christophilus appears to place great reliance upon the evidence of the Jews, and that of Tacitus, in favour of the existence and death of Christ; and upon the general admission that Christianity originated at Jerusalem, according to the New Testament account, I cannot see that decisive character in the evidence which is supposed to be derived from Tacitus, it is at best but a single incidental phrase which might be introduced in succeeding ages. The admission of the Jews, at the present day, in my opinion, can be no evidence whatever, and Christians have taken good care to destroy every thing written in the early ages against their own system. In the absence of all other evidence if we turn to the account of Christians themselves, as contained in the Scriptures, even then the certainty of his death is far from being substantiated. The time that he is represented to have remained upon the cross was not by any means sufficient to ensure the death of any individual. According to Mark, after having been six hours upon the cross, he is made to cry out with a loud voice; three hours afterwards he is taken down: the time was so short that Pilate marvelled that he was already dead. By John's account the Jews thought that the time was insufficient to secure their death, on which account they denied that their legs might be broken: the legs of the thieves are broken, but those of Jesus remain unbroken; what the soldier is reported to have done with a spear, so as to cause the flowing of blood, might probably assist in his recovery: but, however this might be, with these accounts, and no better evidence, before me, I cannot believe in the death of Jesus on the cross.

It has generally been urged on the part of the Free-thinking Christians, that those who have written against revealed religion have confounded Christianity with its corruptions. This may in some respects be true, as it is very difficult to ascertain what Christianity was in its origin, and it only requires a little ingenuity to enable any person to find texts in the Bible, and even in the New Testament, in support of any opinions whatever. The plan you have taken of discarding many of those doctrines which are unreasonable and contrary to known facts, has no doubt been productive of good; but in following up the course you have undoubtedly rejected many ideas entertained by the authors of the books called the New Testament. The rejection of a belief in the places called heaven and hell, a disbelief in the existence of a supernatural being called the devil, and the doctrine of eternal torments are amongst this class; but as you have rejected those ideas on account of being contrary to reason and the known principles of Nature. I shall pass over them, and content myself, at present, by making a few observations upon other parts of the New Testament, and upon that which you as a body general say constitutes Christianity.

I have previously observed that Christianity being founded upon Judaism, it becomes liable to all the objections I have already brought against that system. I shall now endeavour to show that the language of the founder of Christianity, in many instances, par-

takes of the same unjust, barbarous, and savage nature. I know that modern refinement has endeavoured to obviate many of my objections by giving forced and metaphorical constructions to the passages in question. But how, or in what way are we to judge of any man but by his language and his actions, or how are we to judge of any system but by the conduct of its founders, and the effects it produces. On this account I totally disregard the language of modern commentators, and bring the language of Scriptures, such as I find it, to the test of reason. The following passage shows that the founder of Christianity thought that the Mosaic laws were not sufficiently cruel, and he assigns the same punishment to him who was angry with his brother without a cause, as was anciently assigned to murder (Matt. v. 21). "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But, I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother thou vile man (Raca), shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire." I shall leave you to determine where hell and its fire are to be found, and the purposes for which they are designed, to me it appears evident that it was a denunciation of severe punishment, by means of fire. The fantastical language of Jesus, contained in the sixth of Matthew, about taking care for to-morrow, even if we admit Wakefield's translation, "take no anxious thought," forms a fine contrast with your own principles. Jesus does his utmost to prevent us laying up treasure on earth, or taking thought for to-morrow; but Free-thinking Christians, by experience grown wiser than their master, consider it as one of the first duties of the Christian to endeavour to procure such a portion of earthly treasure as shall ensure themselves and families against the dangers of want. I ask you if this can be done without taking thought for to-morrow, and anxious thought too. The destruction of the whole herd of swine, under the pretext of casting out demons, or as you generally term it curing raving madness, is a fine specimen of the regard which the Founder of Christianity paid to the sacred rights of property; it shows, in a complete manner, how he acted up to the principle: "Do to others as you would that they should do to you." Was he unable to cure the man without the destruction of the swine, if not, where was his power? If he were, how could he be justified in destroying the property of any individual.

Matthew x. contains, a fine specimen of the peaceable disposition of the founder of Christianity, and of the manner in which he taught the social duties you profess to prize so highly. He says; think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law, against her mother in law, and a man's foes shall be those of his own household." I leave you and all the thinking part of man-

kind to judge how far this is consistent with those principles of mildness, conciliation, forbearance, and kindness, which moral philosophers consider most likely to remove crime, to reform the vicious, and to render those around us happy in order that we may be partakers in their happiness.

Your professed ideas of an association called the Christian church, or by whatever other name you may please to call it, are nothing more than a fantastical delusion. Your professions as contained in the laws of the church, are, that the Christian church ought to form but one body, in which the members should have the same regard for each other, as that which exists between the different members of the human body. In your present circumstances such principles are absolutely impracticable, neither can they ever be reduced to practice unless the present order of society should be completely overturned. It is in vain for you to profess to act upon them. Every day's experience must convince you that your interest as individuals are so widely opposed to each other that it is impossible that this opposition of interests should not cause jealousy and dispute. It will cause parties amongst your members, and must finally either destroy your society altogether, or produce that careless indifference and disregard for each other which is observable amongst other religious associations, and has begun with yours. The idea of uniting rich and poor in a society like your own, and expecting that they should have the mutual regard of brethren for each other, is quixotic in the extreme, riches invariably excite in their possessors ideas of self importance, and frequently an unsupportable degree of pride, and a tyrannical disposition : On the other hand poverty frequently debases the mind, and renders those who are subject to its influence mean and servile : yet these two extremes of character, you profess to unite in one society, and expect that they should have the mutual regard of brethren for each other, whilst their interests are almost every moment opposed to each other. It is impossible that such an heterogeneous association should be productive of happiness. Such a society is founded on delusion ; jealousy and discord must be its productions. The parties in such an association can have no mutual feeling or sympathy for each other : their interests are continually clashing : they cannot see objects in the same point of view, because they are unacquainted with the circumstances and feelings of each other. Is there a man amongst you who has never felt the galling shame of poverty, that supposes himself capable of entering into the feelings of the poor man who has imbibed the highest notions of independence to which the nature of your association leads ? If there be such a one I have no hesitation in telling him that he is mistaken. If sickness, or any other misfortune, reduce a poor individual to a state of distress, he must of necessity either sacrifice his principles or leave your society ; and he who when possessing the means of comfortable subsistence was considered the best member of your society, will leave it soonest if reduced to a state of distress. It is the principle of such a character to say to himself: When I am in a state of

prosperity, my friends shall hear from me often; but if adversity be my portion, why should I make others partakers of my misery. I trust I have clearly shown that the sanguinary penal code of the Jews, and the servile and demoralizing tendency of the Mosaic institutions, are such as must render any people who live in conformity to them, proud, yet servile; barbarous, cruel, and haters of the whole human race; and that such institutions could not possibly be the work of an all-wise and just Governor of the Universe, the father and friend of all mankind; and I think I may fairly take leave of the Jewish legislator for ever, by stating the following self-evident propositions.

1. That if the Jewish penal code which inflicted death on so many occasions, was the work of a God, that God was destitute of humanity and justice.

2. That if it was the command of a God that criminals should be executed by being stoned to death by the whole population, that God must have been desirous of brutalizing the minds of his chosen people.

3. That if the Mosaic institutions, giving absolute dominion to the priests, were the work of a God, that God must have been an enemy to the happiness of mankind.

4. That tyranny, injustice, and barbarity, being the distinguishing features of the Mosaic law, we have every reason to consider it as a system of delusion, invented by a set of knavish tyrants, in order to afford them an opportunity of tyrannizing over the minds of men.

5. That Christianity, being founded on Judaism becomes liable to all the objections I have urged against that system.

I have clearly shown that the Book of Nature does not prove the existence of such a being as you denominate God; if then there be any evidence of the existence of such a being, it must arise from his having revealed himself to man. We have seen that the Mosaic system is founded on fraud, delusion, and injustice. The Christian system professes to be founded on that of Moses, and is chargeable with all the objections I have brought against that system. I have shown that the language of the Founder of Christianity partakes of the same cruel and barbarous disposition as that which marks the system of Moses. The intrinsic merit of these systems, so far from showing them to be the work of a God of Justice, shows them to be the work of the most tyrannical of men. In fact all the reasoning which has ever been employed on the part of religion has never yet been able to demonstrate the existence of a God; if then this first principle of all religion be yet unproved, we are justified in saying, that religion is a delusion, and that God is nothing more than a being of the imagination, a phantom, devised by knaves, in order to frighten fools.

Religionists tell us, that God created man in his own image, however the truth appears to be that man make their gods in their own image. For though most of the professors of Christianity, profess

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to worship one God, yet if we except the universal adoration of wealth, almost every individual appears to have a separate God for himself. We find God pictured by different votaries in all the shades of difference from the savage wretch who will rejoice over the greatest part of his creatures suffering eternal torments in a lake of fire, to the refined and benevolent being, desirous of making all happy. It is evident that these different ideas of God arise from the dispositions, and from the circumstances in which their framers are placed. Each forms an idol suited to his own mind, gives him a number of fanciful and extravagant qualities, then calls him God and falls down to worship him. This is the superstition which degrades mankind, and renders them wretched and miserable. Instead of men being actuated by rational motives, and endeavouring by experience to determine the road to happiness, they pursue happiness by the road pointed out by the priest, or by a book, which, priests say, contains the will of God, but, alas! their course terminates in disappointment and misery. Instead of endeavouring to render this life happy, by searching out and applying those motives which are more conducive to happiness, men spend their time in idle dreams about an uncertain and precarious futurity.

In conclusion, my only request is, that you will candidly examine what I have advanced. If my objections are well founded, and you are convinced of the evil tendency of what is called religion, I hope your exertions will in future be directed to promoting the happiness of men in this life, by the cultivation of moral virtue. On the other hand, if I am mistaken, all that I have to request is, that you will demonstrate the existence of your God.

I am, Gentlemen, yours, &c.

JOSEPH BRAYSHAW.

H. Boyle acknowledges the receipt of £1.; J. Rhodes, 5s.; and W. V. Holmes, 5s.; from the Friends to Freedom, who meet at _____, by Mr. Robinson.

One Pound for John Barkley, from J. W. an orthodox Christian, because he is fully convinced from reading the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, that Christ was a real Radical Reformer and a Deist.

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